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ABSTRACT

The paper presents results of a survey regarding the role of the teacher of emotionally disturbed (ED) children in reintegration of students into the regular classroom. The following concerns which were identified in the study are addressed: (1) objective means of determining readiness for reintegration; (2) clearly defined procedures; (3) clarifications of responsibilities of individuals; (4) guidelines in the selection of the teacher or the classroom; (5) intentional, systematic strategies for facilitating generalization of learning (academic and behavioral) between the ED class and the regular classroom; and (6) inservice training, both for the ED teacher in how to reintegrate students and for the regular class teachers in how to work with ED students. Listed among criteria for determining degree of individualization which can be provided to students are the social environment, degree of structure, and teaming arrangements. The survey of regular and special class teachers is reported to indicate four top priority inservice topics related to ED students--behavioral characteristics, management techniques, teaching techniques, and learning characteristics. (SBH)

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# Considerations in the Integration of Behaviorally Disordered Students into the Regular Classroom

## Teacher Concerns and Considerations

A Presentation at the 57th Annual International Convention of the Council for Exceptional Children, Dallas, Texas

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Introduction

Evelyn Deno, in her recent book Educating Children With Emotional, Learning, and Behavior Problems, has stated that classroom teachers are the heart of the educational system (p. 125). She was referring to regular classroom teachers but I think this would also apply to ED teachers in Iowa who have been involved in reintegration of students into the regular classroom. In my discussion of the survey results from a teacher's point of view, you'll note that what reintegration is occurring in Iowa seems to be due to a great extent to the initiative of the ED teacher. Since only teachers were selected for this survey, perhaps the results are slanted toward teacher involvement. Psychologists, consultants, and others may present a different perspective.

These statements are not made to downplay the role of the building principal or the support staff. The principal, by virtue of a leadership role, is the key person in instituting or implementing change. Support staff are also usually in a position to effect change. The principal, support staff, and parents all need to be involved to insure success.

Implications for the ED Teacher

It is indicated in the results of the study that although psychologists, consultants, principals, social workers, counselors, and parents in addition to the ED teacher are involved in the reintegration process, the primary responsibility falls on the shoulders of the ED teacher. The

ED teacher, as shown in the survey, is crucial in making the decision to initiate integration (as indicated by 90.8% of the respondents), is primarily responsible for coordinating integration efforts (as indicated by 61.8% of the respondents), and is responsible for follow-up (as indicated by 47.4% of the respondents). It cannot be determined from this survey if those responsibilities are assigned to the ED teacher or if the teacher has assumed those duties because they were not being carried out by any of the other professionals involved. Regardless of how the ED teacher has acquired these responsibilities, it appears that support for the teacher in many facets of the reintegration process is lacking. For example, only 30.3% of the teachers responding had time allowed in the day for planning for reintegration. The question was not asked if this was also a time when ED teachers could meet with regular class educators. A time to meet jointly is important if efforts of all involved in integration are to be coordinated. Another example of inadequate support is the fact that only 34.2% of the teachers indicated that they are operating under "clearly defined" procedures for reintegration. The assumption would be that most are left to determine how to go about reintegration without procedural guidelines. Also of interest is the fact that Special Class with Integration (SCI) teachers reported having clearly defined procedures less often than did Self-Contained Classroom (SCC) and severe SCC. SCI teachers, by nature of the type of classroom

should be more involved in integration than the other programs.

ED teachers are also working with regular class teachers who for the most part do not have any type of in-service training in working with ED students. 13.2% of the teachers indicated they worked with regular class teachers who have received in-service training, but we have no information as to the quality of the in-service or regarding who is responsible for conducting the in-service. In spite of these problems, it is amazing that 51.3% of the ED teachers surveyed have arrived at a clarification of responsibilities between themselves and regular class teachers.

Overall, it appears that those professionals involved in reintegration of ED students are currently operating in many instances without:

1. objective means of determining readiness for reintegration
2. clearly defined procedures
3. clarifications of responsibilities of individuals
4. guidelines in the selection of the teacher or the classroom
5. intentional, systematic strategies for facilitating generalization of learning (academic and behavioral) between the ED class and the regular classroom.
6. in-service training, both for the ED teacher in how to reintegrate students and for the regular class teachers in how to work with ED students.

I will address each of these concerns in the remainder of my presentation.

Determining Readiness

It probably comes as no surprise that "I think he's ready" was the most frequently selected criteria for determining readiness for reintegration. However, it ranked twelfth in usefulness as an aid in decision making. Teachers apparently aren't too happy with the approach. We need a better way--one that demonstrates accountability in programming for ED students, that shows a student (and school) is ready to accept reintegration.

Unfortunately in surveying ED teachers in Iowa, we did not ask what information was available on a student at the time of placement in an ED class or how valuable that information was to the ED teacher. This would have been useful. In order to assess progress a student has made in the ED classroom, a teacher needs adequate, objective information regarding the students' initial behavioral, social, and academic status at time of placement. This information would aid in planning for reintegration which logically begins at the time a student is staffed and placed in the ED class. Ideally, and I think, usually, complete psychological and academic achievement test data are available on a student. Systematic observation of the student in the regular classroom prior to referral and placement in an ED class is not always carried out, however. This observational information would help the ED teacher more clearly define problem behaviors, needs of the students, and environmental factors which may influence the student (teacher or

peer attention, academic problem areas such as math, and so on).

Observation conducted within a variety of school settings on several days prior to and following placement in the ED class would help the ED teacher determine what possible effect the change in classrooms may have had on the student. Inclusion of behavior counts on the student and peers as well is important. All this information can be utilized by the teacher in determining areas of need and in writing an IEP for the student.

To monitor progress toward goals established for the student, continued systematic observation should be scheduled on a regular basis in the ED classroom. Usually it is expected that the ED teacher should be obtaining baseline data and maintaining objective behavior counts on a student or students. This is easily possible if only one or two students are involved in a special behavior modification program. However, in an ED classroom, it is very likely that twelve students could be involved in individualized behavior management programs. It is extremely difficult for the teacher to try to teach and at the same time take reliable behavior counts even though many ED teachers are well trained in behavior observation techniques. Instead, a paraprofessional or less desirably a volunteer, could be trained within a short time tc do specific forms of behavior observation and once rater reliability is determined, could be utilized on a regular basis. The ED teacher, consultant, or psychologist should be able to

do the training. The extra hours involved in training will be more than returned in the course of the school year. The ED teacher will have objective information, rather than just teacher perceptions upon which to base decisions to initiate reintegration of an ED student into the regular classroom.

Observational information coupled with such things as records regarding identified needs and objectives developed at the time of or prior to placement, anecdotal records, records of academic progress, listings of successful and unsuccessful motivators or reinforcers, adaptive behavior, learning strengths and weakness, affective assessment, and progress toward social/behavioral goals can serve to supplement the subjective methods currently used by the teachers surveyed to determine readiness. The professional judgment of those working with ED programs is generally sound, but we need more objective information available to show regular class educators that a student's needs have been met and is likely ready to work in a regular class.

Decision Making--Role Responsibilities

In addition to deciding what information will be used to monitor student progress in the ED class and to determine readiness for reintegration, another consideration in developing reintegration procedures is determining role responsibility in decision making. In 90.8% (surprisingly not all) of the cases reported in the survey, the ED teacher was involved in the decision making process (i.e., when is the

student ready?") in the reintegration of students. The regular class teacher was mentioned by 69.7% of the respondents, the principal by 63.2%, the parents by 56.9%, and student by 53.9%. Involvement of persons in the three primary support positions most frequently assigned to ED classroom was listed as follows: ED consultant involvement was reported by 53.9% of the teachers, psychologist by 48.7%, and social worker by 30.3%. Counselors were named by only 25% of the respondents. It appears that in only about half the public school classes are support staff involved in decision making for integration. Perhaps in the case of the school psychologist, that person is still assigned the traditional role of testing and has not become involved in the total educational program. In the case of consultants and social workers, as well as the psychologist, perhaps the classroom assignment load is too high. If support staff can only meet with the teacher an hour a week or less frequently and at most observe in the classroom on an irregular basis they are not in the best position to make informed decisions regarding a student's educational program.

In developing procedural guidelines, a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities in the decision-making process will be helpful to all concerned. The role of support staff in relation to the classroom and teacher can influence their role in relation to reintegration decsision making. If support staff are involved from the time of initial placement of the student in developing long or short range goals for the

student's IEP and also involved in the continuous evaluation of progress toward these goals, they will be in a position to make informed decisions regarding integration of a student. However, if their role is limited to such things as testing, home visits, or provision of learning materials, I question whether they should have a primary decision making role. Those persons who know the student best, the teachers, parents, and principal can most accurately judge the student's chances for success as well as develop the most appropriate educational program within the regular class structure.

At any rate, discussion of program philosophy and possible reexamination of support staff roles may be called for in ED programs where the primary objective is return to the regular classroom. Acknowledged commitment to this goal is needed.

Reasons for Reintegration

Most states continue to provide the option of special class placement. Research into the long-range effects of special class placement of ED students is limited (Vaac, 1972, Vaac and Kirst, 1977, Rubin, Simson, & Betwee, 1966) as is research on the effect of the ED student in the public school classroom (Saunders, 1971). Those of us conducting the study are of the philosophy that special class placement can be beneficial for students but that we have ethical and legal incentives for speedy return to the regular classroom.

If we are to continue special class placement, we need to state

specific purposes for placement, develop an appropriate program for the student while in the special class, and state specific goals for reintegration.

An area not explored in the survey, but one which I feel is extremely important is the reason for integrating a child into a regular classroom. The reasons for integration could be broadly categorized as social, instructional, or temporal. Kauman, Gottlieb, Agard, and Kukic (1975), in discussing mainstreaming, focused on these three objectives. The teacher and others involved need to consider these three reasons, decide which of them is the primary reason for reintegrating the student, and develop a clear statement delineating the purpose.

Often the goal of integration is to promote social development by exposing the student to appropriate peer models. Vaac & Kirst (1977) report that it is thought that the more exposure a nonhandicapped child has with an emotionally disturbed child, the more positive will be the attitude toward the ED child. In an earlier study, Vaac (1972) found no more positive or negative selection choices for students in a regular class who had received special class intervention. Saunders (1971) reported no "behavior contagion" after a three-month experimental study in which ED students were placed in a regular classroom. In other words, one bad apple did not make the whole classroom rotten! The fear that the regular class student will model the inappropriate behavior

of the ED student seems to be unfounded.

Kounin, Friesen, & Norton (1966) concluded that teachers who were successful as classroom managers were also successful in managing the behavior of emotionally disturbed children within the classroom. These same teachers also create a climate that "contains" the misbehavior of the ED child to prevent it from disrupting the behavior of the other children. Effective classroom control by regular class teacher can therefore provide the environment for positive social interactions among all students.

A teacher may wish to integrate a student to stimulate greater academic achievement or to provide more varied learning experiences than may be available in the special class. As in other areas, research into academic gains made by students in an ED class is limited and conflicting. Vaac (1972) reported no difference in academic achievement gains by students served in a special class. Haring & Krug (1975), however, stressed that special education has the capacity to provide intensive individualized instruction required to raise achievement levels so as to help a student function in a large group.

In my teaching experience, academic achievement has been a major goal in my classroom and has also proven to be a stumbling block in the integration of some students. Many of the students I receive are under-achieving compared to their age group. Academic progress for them is often slow. When a student is so far behind at placement it

is even more difficult to return him to the regular class because he still has not caught up or is just barely making it. It is asking a lot of a regular class teacher to take a student who needs special academic instruction as well as extra emotional/behavioral support and attention. We need to provide for these students who probably could benefit socially from being in the regular class but likely cannot handle the academic demands. Should they be staffed out, returned to a regular class and served by a resource program or should the student remain in the ED class and have the regular class serve as a resource program to meet his socialization needs? Research should help us answer this question.

At the other extreme is the "gifted student" who is in an ED class. Such a student could profit from a challenging educational program. The exposure to other capable students that he would receive in the regular class is a legitimate reason for integration whenever the student's social skills are such that he can comply with the social and behavioral expectations in the regular classroom.

Differences in curriculum or materials used in the regular classrooms and the ED classroom may serve as an impediment to a smooth transition from one class to another. If an effort is made to keep the student in the same basic instructional materials he used in his home school, those materials may not be the same as those used in the regular classes in the school in which the ED class is housed. This is

an administrative as well as teacher problem.

The third reason for integration may be temporal, that is, the major goal is to have the student spend time in the regular classroom, with no more specific intent than that. The thinking is that the greater amount of exposure to "normal" students, the greater the likelihood of modeling of appropriate behavior or learning.

Selection of the Teacher and/or the Classroom

ED teachers responding to questions regarding selection of the teacher and classroom in which to integrate an ED student tended to emphasize teacher characteristics and personality traits such as, rapport with students, as well as considering the teacher's attitude toward integration, behavioral expectations, willingness to modify the curriculum, willingness to be involved in planning for integration, and academic expectations. Rated lower were proficiency in behavior management techniques, knowledge of exceptional students, rapport with educators, educational philosophy and use of precision teching techniques. Teacher characteristics are extremely important, but it is an area which again is very subjective. A systematic examination of the components of the regular classroom organization is a more objective approach which can be used to supplement the ED teacher's subjective feelings about which teacher would be best for a particular student.

Maynard C. Reynolds (Reynolds & Birch, 1978) has developed a sixteen-step "Assessment of Classroom Learning Environment" Scale (ACLE)which

is intended to help a regular classroom teacher assess the degree of individualization within the classroom. Presumably a classroom with a higher degree of individualization will more easily accommodate the needs of a handicapped student. Other suggested uses of the scale include: planning in-service training, helping individual teachers select areas for professional development, and presenting the image of a "mainstreamed" school. The scale is not to be used to evaluate a teacher or a classroom.

The ACLE Scale could be effectively used by an ED teacher alone or with the regular classroom teachers to explore in a systematic manner the environmental aspects of the classroom and the teacher's expectancies for students. The resulting classroom profile can be used to match a student's needs with a classroom. Each of the sixteen subscales consists of five (5) descriptors sequentially arranged from 1-5 in order of increasing desirability. The highest level is a standard which is hard to meet.

Since Reynolds wrote about mainstreaming all categories of handicapped students, some of the subscales are not always directly applicable to integration of ED students. For example, the first consideration (Subscale 1) is space and facility accommodations to physical impairment, which would seem not to be particularly relevant to most ED classrooms. The others do, however, seem useful. Following are the remaining categories and a brief summation of the descriptors or criteria for

determining degree of individualization which can be provided.

1. Control of and responsibility for the environment--teachers determine if the classroom is governed by the teacher's rules, occasional involvement of students, or by planned involvement of students at various levels of responsibility.
2. Teaching-learning settings--arrangement of desks, interest centers, instructional space within and outside the classroom.
3. Materials--descriptors range from all students using the same materials at the same difficulty level to a variety of materials at several reading levels, audiovisual materials, instructional games, etc.
4. Classroom management (organization for instruction)--at the lowest level of organization the classroom management tends to be mildly chaotic and noisy, minority of students on task at a given time. At the other extreme, at least 90% of the students attend when the teacher seeks to alert the class. Students are clear about consequences and expectations of their behavior.
5. Social environment--do the students work alone in a nonsharing way on instructional tasks, work occasionally in small groups, share materials, interact freely, or does the teacher plan for and reward group work?
6. Recognizing and appreciating cultural and socioeconomic differences--

the teacher determines if majority values and styles dominate, if special projects are conducted to accommodate bilingual, Black, American Indian studies, or if the commitment to cultural pluralism is real and pervasive part of the curriculum.

7. Control of and responsibility for the environment--teachers determine if the classroom is governed by the teacher's rules, occasional involvement of students, or by planned involvement of students at various levels of responsibility.
8. Content (curriculum)--criteria range from strict adherance to the teacher's guide of the text, inclusion of special projects, use of more than one level of a text, use of a variety of supplemental instructional materials, and allowing student interest to guide selection of a significant portion of the content.
9. Degree of structure--description of five levels is provided, ranging from casual attention to structure to systematic varience of structure according to the needs of individual students.
10. Instructional methods--teachers may be using a combination of as many as nine instructional methods--direct instruction, inquiry-discovery methods, group investigations, precision teaching, instructional games, creativity, psychoeducational diagnostic-prescriptive techniques, peer or cross age tutoring,

and developmental teaching. Also, the extent to which the regular class teacher consults with other professionals to help implement additional methods is examined.

11. Rate of learning--students may be expected to perform tasks at uniform rates or to progress at rates indicated by mastery examinations, with all the possible variations in between these extremes.

12. Evaluation--a continuum is provided which runs the gamut from norm-referenced testing to systems which provide for observation, informal assessment, and domain-referenced testing.

13. Affective education--teachers may limit concern for affective development to courtesy and politeness, may sporadically seek to provide for affective development, may include affective education on a planned but infrequent basis, may include it on a regular basis, or may systematically include for it in all subject areas.

14. Teaming arrangements--at the lowest level, problem students are referred to specialists (psychologists, social workers, nurses, etc.) thereby transferring ownership of the problem outside the regular classroom. At the next level the teacher may refer but assists in the diagnosis and allows observation of the student in the classroom. The next level describes teachers that assist in developing the IEP for the student.

Higher levels include this element but also provide for modifications in the regular classroom program as part of the referral process and at the highest level the entire school is involved in providing for "problem" students.

15. Child study process--the levels proceed from the lowest which is referral and segregation for students who do not conform, involvement of specialists in classifying and labeling students for spe[illegible] programs, to determination of appropriate remedial programs, to analyzing teaching-learning setting to determine where improvements can be made, and at the highest level to emphasis on modifications in school practices and school/home environments rather than focusing on deficits in the child.

16. Parent-teacher interaction--can be characterized by crisis stimulated contacts, regular conferences, periodic teacher initiated positive contacts, formal and informal information sharing by both parents and teachers, and close and continuous parent-teacher cooperation.

Generalization of Behavior

As with previously discussed concerns in the reintegration of ED students, the literature does not contain much research specifically dealing with generalization of behavior from the ED classroom to the regular class setting. This is in fact what we are trying to achieve

when we say our goal in programming is return to students the regular classroom. It seems that we need to make our ED classes "different" enough to do the job of teaching the students to cope with the behavioral and social expectation of school while continuing to learn. But at the same time, the classes need to be as similar to the regular classrooms as possible in order to facilitate generalization from one setting to the other. Researchers have found that generalization does not just happen on its own. We have to teach it, just like we teach anything else. Sulzer & Mayer (1972) recommend emphasizing common elements in situations to facilitate generalization. Stainback & Stainback (1978) suggest teaching a child in as natural an environment as possible in order to eliminate the need to generalize learning from an unnatural environment to a more natural one.

Stokes & Baer (1977) in an extensive review of the technology of generalization concluded that generalization has been viewed as something that happened, not something produced by procedures specific to it. Stokes & Baer group generalization into nine categories:

1. sequential modification
2. introduce to natural maintaining contingencies
3. train sufficient exemplars
4. train loosely
5. use indiscriminate contingencies
6. program common stimuli

7. mediate generalization
8. train to generalize
9. train and hope

Of the 270 studies relevant to generalization which they reviewed, the "train and hope" approach was the most frequently occurring. In this approach, generalization was not especially programmed. They further stated that a therapeutic behavior change, to be effective, often (but not always) must occur over time, persons, and settings, and the effects of change sometimes should spread to a variety of related behaviors. They advise that researchers should assume generalization must be programmed.

ED teachers can try to provide opportunity for generalization across settings and people (teachers) by sharing with the regular class teacher:

1. what the behavioral and academic expectations for the student have been
2. specific successful approaches to managing behavior problems, such as teacher cues, self-instruction or self-control techniques, Glasser's approach to discipline problems, or use of life-space interviewing techniques.
3. The structure to which the student has been accustomed and what elements of it might be introduced into the regular classroom, or the elements common in a regular classroom which

have been incorporated into the ED class.

4. positive incentives to use with the student which are the same or similar to those used in the special class, especially those which have been used in the ED class which are easy to implement in a regular class.
5. materials--trying to use materials which are common to both classrooms.

The teachers might discuss interim adjustments which may be necessary before expecting compliance with most regular classroom expectations. Together, the teachers can determine how these methods can be applied in the regular classroom. The ED teacher in talking with the student can point out similarities in the teachers and their expectations and way of doing things as well as differences between them, similarities and differences in the classroom rules and routines, materials he will be expected to use, and so on. The teacher and student can also discuss ways of dealing with differences when the situation arises.

Follow-up of Integrated Students

Follow-up is the evaluational aspect of programming for reintegration. It includes monitoring the student's adjustment in the regular class and providing "moral" and technical support to the teacher. The teacher wants to be sure he/she is handling the student the "right way" so as not to cause a set-back in the student's progress.

Forms of follow-up may vary, depending on whether or not the student is integrated part time in the school housing the ED class or if the student is integrated full-time in his "home school." In the case of part-time involvement in the regular class, a short weekly (or more frequent) meeting between the teachers involved would be fairly simple to arrange once a mutually agreeable time is found. Teachers might discuss: the student' work habits, work completion, degree of class participation, attitude, cooperation with the teacher, general behavior, interaction with other students, students' feelings about being with another class, successes and any specific problems which have arisen. This is also a good time to discuss any schedule changes for the next week. Written notes of topics discussed provide a valuable on-going record of adjustment to the regular class. The ED teacher will most likely be the person responsible for follow-up at this point.

If after a trial period, usually several months, part-time integration is successful, the decision may be made for full-time integration in the home school. Because of less opportunity for personal contact, follow-up will more likely be formal. A support staff person, because of greater mobility, would be in a position to contact the child's teacher personally. Otherwise, a written evaluation form could also be used. Again, the same topics as included with the informal follow-up would be listed on the form.

In-service

In-service training is needed both for ED teachers and regular class teachers. Since ED teachers will be working closely with other professionals in planning and implementing integration procedures, they could benefit from verbal skills and listening skills training. With such training they could more effectively serve in a consultant role. In order to more clearly understand what is involved in reintegration, in-service could be conducted which would include:

1. Legal, ethical and philosophical rationale for reintegrating students.
2. Review of literature or research in this area.
3. How to obtain baseline information on a student, monitor progress, and use this information to determine readiness of student to leave ED classroom on part-time basis.
4. Role of teacher, psychologist, consultant, and parent in relation to program planning for the student. Specific individuals should be identified who will be involved in writing IEPs; determining "readiness"; talking with parents about reintegration plans; making initial contacts with regular class teachers; and making contacts with the child's "home school" (either on a regular basis while the child is in the program, or when considering integration). Materials, classrooms, teacher availability, time lines, and transportation

arrangements are all important concerns which must be handled responsibly.

5. Decide what kinds of written records will be kept prior to and during reintegration and during the follow-up phases. For example, regular class teacher may fill out a rating scale on a weekly basis.
6. Determine who is responsibile for follow-up after child's return to his home school and what form the follow-up will take.

Regular class inservice is one of the most frequently mentioned needs. Topics for in-service have been derived from needs assessment by the AEA 7 Teacher Center (26 school districts) and by the mainstreaming committee within our building--both of which addressed mainstreaming all handicapped students.

The Teacher Center needs assessment results indicated four primary areas for in-service for regular class teachers:

1. Informational workshop to discuss mainstreaming of exceptional students in all areas and ways teachers can work with these students.
2. Techniques, programs, and services available for exceptional students.
3. Sharing sessions with teachers who have or had exceptional children in their classrooms.
4. Identification/prescriptive techniques.

Within our building, regular and special class teachers were surveyed. They listed these four areas as top priority in-service topics related to ED students.

1. Behavioral characteristics
2. Management techniques
3. Teaching techniques
4. Learning characteristics

These are all knowledge and skills areas which were not listed by the ED teachers surveyed in the larger study as being important considerations in the selection of teachers for student integration. The ED teachers surveyed stressed attitudes and personal qualities rather than knowledge and skills in working with handicapped students.

These comments regarding the current state of affairs regarding the integration of ED students may seem negative. They are not intended to be. The purpose in initiating this study was to determine the current state of the problem. More research into specific areas is needed. The study did achieve another goal, that of giving professionals some direction by showing areas of need which should be addressed in developing procedures for reintegration. Currently, procedures for integration are in the process of being developed and proposed to the ED teachers in the Waterloo area. Those procedures include many of these elements already discussed, with many more practical items as well.

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